Decline in Rice Production

770. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a noticeable fall in the rice production in the country in the last two years;

(b) if so, the reason therefore;

(c) whether land under rice is being increasingly converted for other crops;

(d) whether Government expect this trend of conversion of rice land to other crops to continue; and

(e) if not, whether any steps are proposed to arrest this decline?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) No, Sir. The production of rice has been increasing consistently in the past two years as given in the table below:

(Million tonnes)

Year	Production of Rice
1996-97	81.73
1997-98	82.54
1998-99	86.00

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The area under rice has increased at the rate of 0.49% per annum during the period 1989-90 to 1998-99.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.